

Appendix 4

Engaging with the County Children and Young People's Forum – December 2025

As part of the development of Gwynedd's new Schools Strategy, we engaged with young people to ensure that their experiences and perspectives informed the strategic objectives.

While many of the comments stem from specific situations within individual schools, the findings reflect wider issues relevant to the implementation of the Strategy across the county.

Discussions were held with young people in order to understand their experiences and views on current education arrangements.

1. The Welsh Language and Identity

Pride was expressed in the Welsh language and its central role in school and community life. Young people were keen to see more natural and relevant opportunities to use the Welsh language. Young people emphasised the importance of the Welsh language as a core element of their educational experience.

2. Digital Learning

The importance of technology as part of modern learning was recognised. In relation to A Level provision, it was noted that hybrid lessons were considered as a potential solution to challenges relating to missing subjects, however, concerns were expressed about the fairness and consistency of the learning experience of these arrangements.

3. Delivering a Fair, Accessible and Inclusive Curriculum

Concerns were noted about the GCSE subject selection system, with some learners expressing a feeling that organisational constraints lead to missing opportunities to study elective subjects.

4. Supply Teachers

Concerns were expressed about the quality and consistency of teaching provision, particularly in relation to supply teacher arrangements. A question was asked about how supply teachers are chosen, with a perception among young people that the standard of teaching varies and, in some cases, is lower than expected. This underlines the importance of ensuring robust processes to maintain high standards and provide a safe and stable learning environment.

5. Length of lessons

Young people asked about the length each lesson, as well as who decides on the timetable and size of each class. They wanted to understand how and why these decisions are made, and how they affect their learning experience at school.

6. Voice and Participation of Young People

Young people stressed the need for their voices to be heard and taken seriously in decisions that affect them. There was a clear desire for more opportunities to influence school life, the curriculum and local decisions.

Although the discussions focused on specific experiences, the findings of engagement with young people in Gwynedd show strong alignment with the main themes of the Gwynedd Schools Strategy 2026-2036.

In particular, the importance of:

- promoting and strengthening the Welsh language across educational experiences,
- ensuring safety, respect and a sense of belonging within schools,
- supporting young people's well-being through democratic participation mechanisms, including the role of school councils and other ways of ensuring that young people's voice influences decisions that affect them.

These findings underline the importance of continuing to meaningfully engage with young people in the future implementation and monitoring of the Gwynedd Schools Strategy 2026 - 2036.